

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Andrea Prola
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Brook Forest Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 60 Regent Drive
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Oak Brook State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60523-1729

County Dupage County

Telephone (630) 920-7610 Fax (630) 325-8452

Web site/URL https://www.butler53.com/brook-forest-es/ E-mail aprola@butler53.com

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Paul O'Malley E-mail pomalley@butler53.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Butler School District 53 Tel. (630) 368-4511

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Dr. Sanjay Rao
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	16	15	31
1	25	19	44
2	24	14	38
3	19	19	38
4	30	24	54
5	20	22	42
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	134	113	247

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 54 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 36 % White
 - 4 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 2%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	263
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Arabic, Bosnian, Cantonese, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Korean, Macedonian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Panjabi, Polish, Spanish, Telugu, Ukrainian, Urdu

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
12 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 14 %
35 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>14</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	16
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 15:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2014

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Butler School District 53 will provide an evolving, innovative, and inclusive educational experience for all students to achieve academic excellence, social maturity, physical and emotional well-being, and an appreciation for cultural diversity.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=butler_53&s=667599

https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=butler_53&s=667666

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Brook Forest school is composed of an array of students, families and community members. We have families that have lived in Oak Brook for many years, including ones where the parents were once students of District 53 and have returned to the community so their children could also be known as a Brook Forest Dolphin. Of course, there are new families in the district. Often when we meet with new parents and inquire about their move to Oak Brook, they answer that joining Brook Forest and the District 53 community are among the most important reasons for the move. The large group that creates the family foundation of Brook Forest is dedicated to an inclusive and welcoming environment with opportunities for input and involvement, high academic standards and the celebration of diversity.

The most important stakeholders of Brook Forest School, our K-5 students, are each meaningfully challenged. We provide opportunities for student growth in various ways. The curriculum provides varying academic levels befitting each student for mathematics, reading and writing. We offer advanced classes, provide interventions and maintain small class sizes. The groups are flexible and give students the opportunity to be placed where they can be engaged, challenged and successful. The curriculum is well balanced, including weekly Guidance classes taught by our social worker, daily movement activities and learning in the area of the fine arts and STEAM.

One of the most important aspects of Brook Forest School is the focused nurturing of our future leaders. Primary students lead the school in the Pledge of Allegiance. It is their voices heard over the intercom each morning that begin our day of learning. As students progress through the grades, their involvement and responsibilities grow. They become active in extracurricular activities, including Student Council run by the fourth and fifth-grade students. The Brook Forest Student Council representatives plan, execute, and reflect upon activities that include spirit days, the school store, fundraisers, charity work and overall assistance throughout the school. Brook Forest offers a myriad of extra-curricular activities including intramural sports, science clubs, art clubs, choir, musicals, Broadcasting Club, Lego Club, Drone Club and contest-based activities including a spelling bee and mathematical challenges.

For over 30 years, Brook Forest School has planned an end-of-the-year event called Exploremore Day. This is a school day where students take six classes of interest to them. The classes range from rock climbing, canoeing, football, cooking, painting, poetry, steel drums to car washing, Indian dancing, fishing and creating a newscast. The classes are taught by staff members, parents, alumni and community members. It truly is the best day of school because the Brook Forest community comes together in a magical way.

March 13, 2020 is a date that will be remembered for a very long time by those at Brook Forest. It was the last day that students were in the building during the 2019-2020 school year. For the rest of that year, our students and staff excelled at remote learning in an unbelievable situation. The thought and care given to each remote lesson exemplified the dedication of the staff and the district to continue providing rigorous and meaningful learning opportunities with an unwavering commitment to meet the learning standards and goals for each student. Remote learning was new to us, yet the entire Brook Forest community of students, parents, and staff rallied to do our best. The students deserved the best, the parents expected the best and the staff gave their best. In August of 2020, the students and staff returned to the building! Many of the classrooms still had the date of March 13, 2020 on the boards. While we were away from the building, we changed. We became stronger. We became more focused on our goals. We grew as learners. And most importantly, we prevailed. During the 2020-2021 school year, District 53 was one of very few schools in the state that was in the building every single day. Students and staff were resilient and overcame great odds. While the 2021-2022 school year still has its challenges due to the pandemic, there is no doubt that the last two years have increased our will to provide the best educational opportunities for our students.

Brook Forest School proudly was named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2014. The recognition banner from our first honor is displayed in our vestibule and commemorates where our school was then and where we still want to be. As students and staff enter the building they are reminded of the excellence found within our school. Recently, a new second-grade student walked past the display. When he asked about the

banner, one of his classmates responded, “That shows that we are a great school. Aren’t you glad you moved here?”

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:

The common philosophy across all subject areas is to meet students' academic needs during the entire learning day. Therefore, instruction is differentiated across all subject areas. Teachers follow a model that addresses whole and small group instruction. The learning model is flexible to allow for students to have access to learning extensions and/or reteaching of lessons. The teacher's instruction is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Each subject area has a curriculum map that facilitates what students need to understand at each grade level. Technology is used daily to enhance instruction. All students have devices containing learning materials that are personalized to their learning needs. The curriculum resources provide paper and digital resources that allow students different learning pathways and experiences when completing assignments. Social emotional learning is embedded across content areas. Lessons are taught by the social worker at every grade level weekly. The school schedule includes monthly team building and celebrations to model social awareness and to build relationships. Every grade level meets with a team of specialists five times per year to review grade level assessments. The assessments include norm-referenced assessments, classroom assessments, and progress monitoring data. The data is reviewed to support teaching and learning and how instruction needs to be altered based on student performance. There are standard assessments that are analyzed at each meeting. Additionally, team members will personalize informal assessments to address the learning needs of students when appropriate. During the 2021-2022 school year, the entire school has attended in-person instruction. The school, district, and community continue to partner to create an environment that places learning as a top priority. The school implements daily schedules, academics, and activities to maximize student learning. The school has created pathways to socially distance during clubs, extracurriculars, assemblies, and field trips. The district has purchased technology to support digital learning opportunities and to accommodate teaching strategies necessary during a pandemic. The district utilizes Flip The Classroom coaches who provide professional learning opportunities to staff and students.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The English Language Arts curriculum and content is aligned to Common Core State Standards. Each grade level has curriculum and unit maps to guide instruction. The curriculum maps include units of study that contain the overarching concepts, vocabulary, text features, and writing prompts. The units include social emotional learning standards and daily instructional statements. All grade levels use the reading and writing workshop model. This model includes instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. The lessons are created for whole class instruction with mini-lessons guiding the daily routine. Students have access to a classroom library and digital texts. The English Language Arts lessons support various fiction and nonfiction texts for students. Each lesson is supported with mentor text. Students have access to leveled texts that are aligned to the themes within each unit. Teachers are provided with a rationale for why each lesson is taught, also aligned to state standards. Within each lesson, a listing of skills and strategies are listed for text and genre. These materials are differentiated for students' individual reading levels that they read during independent reading that occurs each school day. The skills and strategies for the units support text and genre features, structure, visualizing, determining importance, speaking to communicate, listening and responding, and engaging in discussion and collaboration. The units support the instruction of reading and writing, allowing students to develop skills simultaneously over time. As new units are introduced, students have access to multiple graphic organizers which are used to develop, share, and expand their ideas for reading and writing.

Guided Reading-Assessments are used for informal and formal assessments. Reading assessments occurring through informal questioning techniques, and journaling at the beginning and ending of class lessons. During guided reading, teachers take notes on students' reading progress during independent reading, partner reading, and whole class discussion. Teachers use prompts and questioning techniques that are aligned to students' independent reading levels. Students complete reading assessments at the end of each

unit. Teachers also incorporate reading progress monitoring tools that address reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. During Fall and Winter assessments, students in second through fifth grade complete the Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress™ (MAP). All students in grades second through eighth participate in MAP Assessment two times per year in the early fall and again in the late spring. MAP is a standardized assessment that compares students in the same grade level across the nation to measure individual student progress or growth in reading. The students' reading data is compared with additional reading assessments during the year, which includes vocabulary, literary, and informational text. Students attending third through fifth grades complete the state assessment, Illinois Assessment for Readiness, that assesses for student progress when compared to English Language Arts state standards.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Brook Forest Elementary School is a National Blue Ribbon School located in the Chicagoland suburb of Oak Brook, IL. This public school is a high-academic, learning institution and is one of two schools in the Butler School District 53. The mission statement is as follows: to provide an evolving, innovative, and inclusive educational experience for all students to achieve academic excellence, social maturity, physical and emotional well-being, and an appreciation for cultural diversity. With this in mind, Brook Forest Elementary School offers a unique math program that meets the needs of all students, a healthy student-teacher ratio, along with technology resources. All students' needs are met while following individual needs and implementing accommodations when appropriate. The Brook Forest math program uses the HMH Into Math, K-8 Math Curriculum, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. The program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. This series includes resources such as differentiated instruction lesson reteach, lesson challenge, additional practice and fluency lessons. Teachers provide whole and small group instruction with lessons that support scaffolded instruction. Students learn math by completing problems with a teacher, applying concepts through independent practice, and explaining their math reasoning skills to their peers. Students receive additional practice by completing mini-lessons linked to standards and additional practice in homework journals. Students have access to online resources that provide feedback to students immediately in the form of tips, hints, and corrective feedback to help students along the way. Students can check their answers and view hints as they practice lesson content. Interactions in the digital content, such as turn and talk and step away features, encourage in-person student collaboration in a blended learning environment. Once in a session, teachers and students alike are able to share their screens, including representations, drawings, and answers to Into Math tasks created using built-in math tools. All grade levels have access to a math specialist who provides teaching strategies and practice to students through co-teaching strategies, small group instruction, and individual instruction. This specialist designs interventions for students needing additional support in math, and math extensions for students needing enrichment opportunities. Intervention and enrichment are determined by students taking a variety of math assessments. Some of the assessments include beginning and end of year tests, module assessments, performance tasks, and informal assessments. Teachers prepare students for high stakes assessments by incorporating problems that require application and analysis of problem and solution.

Brook Forest Elementary adheres to the following competitive algorithm for mathematical standards in accordance with the student population. Math at the primary level is offered at grade level and above grade level. Students entering second, third, and fourth grades have placement opportunities at grade level, above grade level, and accelerated classes. The fifth grade students follow a similar alignment of at grade level, above grade level, and accelerated classes. Students are taught to think critically while developing processing of real life problems as they apply skills for mastery.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Science helps children develop key life skills, including an ability to communicate, remain organized and focused, and even form their own opinions based on observation. Children are hands-on learners, and the world around them provides so many natural opportunities. The science curriculum is based on laboratory experiences which are used to reinforce science concepts. It is organized to expose students to the Biological, Earth and Physical Sciences in a developmentally appropriate manner. It reflects our belief that the best science education for students is one that gradually introduces them to the knowledge, methods and

necessary skills to investigate scientific concepts while respecting the educational and developmental needs of all students.

Kindergarten students begin their science careers at Brook Forest with an introduction to science and science tools. Then they build their schema in all three science domains- physical, Earth and life. Kindergarten students learn how to use basic tools, use their senses to make observations, begin asking their own questions about science phenomena

First Grade students round off the year building on their understanding of life science, and observe multiple types of life cycles with real creatures such as butterflies, ladybugs and praying mantises in the classroom!

Second Grade students start off the year learning about matter and its 3 main states. Then they focus heavily on Earth science and types of water and landforms found on the planet Earth. 2nd grade students end the year deepening their understanding of life science and plant and animal reproduction through the hatching of chicks in the classroom!

Third Grade students will learn to write lab reports, recognize patterns in nature, and promote investigation.

Fourth Grade students will build upon what they learned in 3rd grade starting the year by typing lab reports, promoting understanding, application, and synthesis of scientific questions.

Fifth Grade students evaluate arguments by applying newly formed understandings and transferring knowledge to new situations.

Students have the option to join clubs that meet before and after school (rocket club, geology club) and a Science Exposition in the Spring. The Science Exposition is a research project for science experiments where the students explore a topic that interests them and allows them to explore it in more depth. Students present their results to their peers after school.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Students at Brook Forest are lucky to have the social sciences embedded into many daily lessons. Inquiry is at the forefront of many of the lessons, and students both create and answer essential questions. Students respond with answers that are supported by reasons, examples, facts, research or consensus. Of course, lessons focus on civics, geography, economics and history.

Fifth grade students participate in the annual Colonial Fair in the spring. Students research a person, event or topic from the colonial time period. They present individual projects that include creative writing, research and display. In addition, students work with classmates to host a Colonial Fair in which they become experts on a colonial game or craft. Students in grades Kindergarten-Grade 4 and parents visit the Colonial Fair and participate in hands-on activities, such as butter churning, weaving, Maypole dancing or Nine Men's Morris.

In fourth grade the students bring a wax museum to our school. Each student researches a person who has made a contribution to the world. The students dress in costume and prepare oral presentations for museum visitors.

The Ellis Island simulation is a favorite for Brook Forest third-grade students. After learning about immigration, the students travel through the many steps involved with entering the United States. The students are assigned steerage or first-class status on the ships and are treated accordingly. Parent Teacher Organization members act as inspectors who interview immigrants to see if they are medically or legally "fit" to enter the country.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Physical Education will help guide students on their journey to wellness by teaching them how to exercise safely, with proper form, and learn about the benefits that their bodies will receive as a result. Students will also learn the role that nutrition will play as part of their wellness. Students will learn strategies to reduce stress, like mindful breathing, yoga and cardio-exercise can provide. Students will be taught basic skills to help them feel confident to participate in activities outside of the physical education setting. Learning that a “Winner” is someone who tries their hardest, plays fairly, and demonstrates good sportsmanship. All students in grades first through fifth grades will take the Fitness Gram fitness assessments to track personal fitness levels.

In art class, students learn to think and create like artists. Our art program emphasizes the natural connections between art, literature, science, social studies, math, and social-emotional learning to create cross-curricular projects. Art history is integrated in a culturally responsive way. Skill-building projects ensure all students gain the same technical skills and knowledge as they learn to think like artists. Students will experience a range of media, subjects, and techniques. After basic skills are developed, choice-based projects engage students in creative thought and deeper understanding in areas specific to a learner’s interests and/or talents.

In music class, students will expand their knowledge of music and musical skills via hands-on learning experiences. Through singing, playing instruments, movement, and dramatic play students will learn the basics of music while making deep connections with the world around them and themselves. Students will learn a vast range of musical concepts from steady beat to composing over standard chord progressions and everything in between. This expansive curriculum is presented through culturally responsive teaching with new topics being discovered along with cultures that implement these musical ideas. Throughout these activities, students will develop their creativity, problem solving skills, and unlock their leadership potential.

All grade levels attend STEAM classes during their school week. Students work in various grouping styles as they complete hands-on activities during their class period. The teacher always has students analyzing their work and determining how to improve the building of an object or how to apply learned information to a new activity. The school participated in a STEAM night of fun and learning that captured how to use electronics and mind brain education. Some of the activities included a STEAM arcade, sphero painting, and other hands-on activities.

In library class we learn the basics of library skills by exploring both the catalog and the physical space of the learning environment in order to become independent and confident navigators through guided exercises. The library collection is purposely curated and developed to provide culturally responsive materials for staff and students. Research and literature cycles are followed alternately throughout the year. These focus on developing basic research skills and the ability to find and identify credible information, as well as literature appreciation that involves book talks on a variety of genres, in depth genre studies, and non-fiction read alouds to expand thinking and encourage inquiry based learning.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Brook Forest uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework to support the learning needs of all students. This framework is implemented at Brook Forest to increase a systemic process across grade levels and schools. MTSS is supported by all staff, teachers, and administrators in the district. The MTSS team consists of administrators, school psychologists, social workers, teachers, and content specialists. The main goal of MTSS is to allow access to learning opportunities so each student can experience success. Some Highlights of MTSS include core instruction addressing the Common Core State Standards, data driven

decision making process, delivery of differentiated instruction from classroom teachers, and evidence-based strategies and interventions supporting English Language Arts, Math, Social Emotional Learning Standards.

Team meetings are held with each grade level each fall, winter, and spring semester. A collection of assessments are reviewed as a team. Student data are analyzed to determine how students are progressing and how instruction can be delivered and enhanced to meet the needs of every student. For students requiring intervention support, team members determine what research-based intervention is appropriate, how progress will be monitored, and team members responsible for implementing the selected intervention.

Interim data review meetings are held at each grade level to discuss student progress for students receiving English Language Arts and/or Math interventions. The purpose of this meeting is to analyze progress monitoring data and determine if adjustments need to be implemented prior to a data review meeting. At this meeting, teachers review all student data to ensure each student is making progress and receiving appropriate instruction to be successful.

An intervention is anything a school does, above and beyond what all students receive that helps a student succeed in school. This additional support can be a practice, method, strategy and/or program. The implementation and delivery of interventions are based on individual needs. Interventions can be selected using evidence and through thoughtful conversations. Therefore, interventions are delivered in the general education setting or outside the general education setting which is determined by individual learning needs.

Parents are notified when students are demonstrating a need for an intervention. Communication is a top priority. Parents can schedule a meeting to share any thoughts or concerns related to this model during the school year.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students performing above grade level have access to differentiated and personalized instruction during their school day. Teachers provide leveled texts, differentiate questioning techniques, and provide learning extensions. The school offers accelerated math classes to be taught at advancement of one to two grade levels of Common Core State Standards. The classes provide content acceleration, as well as enrichment opportunities within the classes. Teachers differentiate instruction using formal and informal assessments. The instruction may change based on student performance and individual goals.

Accelerated Learning Program English Language Arts uses the workshop model for instruction.

In reading, students spend a majority of time in book clubs. Students lead the twice-weekly club meetings, from creating club agreements to scheduling their daily reading. The leaders start the club conversation and make sure each member gets ample time to share.

Conversations, both peer to peer and teacher to peer, are a major teaching tool. Through these conversations, typically centered around the targeted skills of the unit, students are often called upon to refer to a mentor text as well as the unit rubric. Students practice accountable talk, learning ways to both agree and disagree respectfully, supporting their ideas with evidence from the texts.

Writing is one way students demonstrate their understanding of specific skills. Students write weekly, both short jots and longer essays. Each reading and writing unit allows students time to practice specific skills, receiving weekly oral and written feedback. Through consistent feedback from both their peers and teachers, as well as a focus on the mentor texts and rubrics, students have the power to not only meet but exceed as writers. Read-aloud is a component all love, as it combines all that is done into one shared experience over fabulous texts.

3c. Special education:

The Brook Forest special education department is a continuum of services that meets the needs of students using a variety of service delivery models. Students may be serviced within their general education setting,

in a special education setting, or a combination of both. In addition, students may benefit from team consultative services. These services are key in supporting their learning accommodations and modifications across all curricular areas. In addition to academic skills, special education teachers may address executive functioning deficits utilizing research based interventions and methods. At Brook Forest, students are serviced in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment. Support is established initially at a minimal level and increased over time based on student needs. It is believed that in an inclusive educational environment every student can learn because all students have unique contributions which enrich us. Given a thoughtful and caring community of learners, each student can achieve their highest potential.

We believe collaboration and teamwork should be at the forefront of all plans. All Individual Education Plans are developed with a multidisciplinary team. This team includes parents, general and special education teachers, administrators, and other relevant personnel. Our related service team is made up of a dedicated team of professionals that work to address various needs such as health, fine and visual motor, social emotional needs, etc. Although education programs may differ from student to student based on individual needs, equity is imperative across the curriculum.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

English Learners are supported with instruction taught from the licensed teacher instructing this population of students. Students are assessed to identify how to meet their needs for speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to provide accommodations and tools to assist students during their learning day. Students receive instruction in a small group setting, as well as receiving instruction inside the general education environment. The teacher instructing English Learners provides resources that are aligned to Common Core State Standards. Also, the teacher participates in professional development that supports supplementing reading materials for their needs. Teachers acquire student background information through games, story time, and learning new vocabulary. Students express their own interests and make connections with the lessons being taught. English Learners have access to speaking and listening exercises during small group instruction to help them as they carry over necessary skills in the general education classroom. Students will participate in turn and talk activities, active questioning, and games that support conversations with classmates. Teachers create lessons that naturally reinforce reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students read books and write about their learning in journals. Students have access to visuals and videos that enhance vocabulary development and usage in writing and speaking exercises. English Learners have individual data that are reviewed with their classroom teachers monthly. This allows teachers to make adjustments to instruction and create lesson plans that include specific accommodations.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The school creates goals at the beginning of the school year to foster student engagement. Each day, students listen to morning announcements that create a positive learning day for all students. The school promotes the three R's of being responsible, respectful, and ready. Students can earn incentives during their school day for being ready to learn and participate in daily activities. The school continues to survey students to understand their interests. Goal setting is used to motivate students to learn and demonstrate positive choices. At the beginning of each trimester, students attend assemblies and learn how they can work as a team to achieve goals. This school year, grade levels were paired with other grade levels to complete collaborative activities. This project allows students to adopt animals from the local zoo. Students are participating in multiple experiences to learn about the adopted animals while collaborating with peers from across the school. Additionally, students work as a team to earn positive incentives such as additional recess, charades with the principal, and special events. Learning activities that take place outside of the classroom include assemblies about drawing superhero cartoons, robotics, and heart healthy topics such as fitness and teamwork. Exploremore Day is an all school event that allows student choice for more than 30 available courses that occurs at the end of each school year. The school continues to implement past traditions while creating new traditions at school. Appropriate adjustments have been made to accommodate learning during COVID-19. Student engagement has remained a top priority. Teachers participate in group planning sessions to identify how to enhance teaching practices and continue to offer new opportunities for engagement by offering various before school and after school clubs. The school has attended school wide field trips including Healing Fields and trips to the local zoo. These events create a positive environment for students because the school models teamwork and support for each other when participating in these activities. Brook Forest fosters a welcoming environment by infusing experiences into the daily schedule to engage in students. Teachers and principals join students throughout their day to learn about what they are learning, what excites them at school, and how to always seek new pathways for learning.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The school collaborates with families and the community on a daily basis. The Parent Teacher Organization partners with the school to host events that support teachers and students. The events align to the school's yearly goals. This helps to align student learning with projects that will benefit students between home and school. At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, the school's Curriculum Night included activities that would be hosted during the school year. Planning with families allows for inclusion of ideas and builds on teaming with the community. The school also works with the Oak Brook Police Department to promote relationship building that fosters trust and support. The police department attends school assemblies and events that occur at school and within the community. Some of the events attended by the police department this school year included Healing Fields, trips to the Brook Field Zoo, 50th Anniversary Celebration, and a community lock in event. Another partnership is the Oak Brook Library. The school and library share resources to enhance students' reading, writing, and researching abilities. The Oak Brook Library is provided with the school's goals for the academic year. This supports home and school connections by students expanding their reading selection between school and the community library.

Another partnership is with the Brookfield Zoo. This school year, the school adopted two dolphins from the zoo. The entire school attended the dolphin show at the zoo and learned exciting facts about the adopted dolphins. The students demonstrated excitement and engagement for the adopting of the animals. As part of the 50th Anniversary celebration, students were partnered with various grade levels so they could work on school projects with their peers attending different grade levels. Due to the student awareness for animals that occurred when adopting the dolphins, the students were given the opportunity to adopt an animal of their choice that were selected by each team in the school. The partnership between the school and the zoo has allowed for families to attend the zoo and make connections to what the students have learned about with the peers. The police department also adopted an animal of their choice, which is included as part of the 50th Anniversary celebration. The library contributed to this project by providing research opportunities to students that can be used throughout home and school connections.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The school supports an environment where teachers feel supported by including staff in the decision-making process. The school understands the need for supporting culture and climate before addressing initiatives that address content and strategy. At the beginning of the school year, all staff members were invited to meet with the principal to discuss their thoughts and goals for the upcoming school year. The data collected during these informal meetings was used to support teacher institute days and goal setting for the yearly professional development meetings. The staff meets every month as a faculty to address agenda items addressing students' needs, teaching and learning, and the culture of the faculty. The school also has multiple committees that meet to address school goals. Staff members are informed of any information from the meetings through weekly communication. The school also has a team of professional coaches who are also teachers in the school. This team of coaches work to attain the goals of the school. Also, they are on staff to support any questions or needs that staff may have during the school day. The school has access to new technology and systems. The group of coaches work to develop and implement professional development so the teachers experience success when learning how to use new technology. While there has been a need to support technology, the coaches worked with the principal to align instructional goals with their coaching agendas. The coaches meet once per week as a team and schedule individual meetings to create tools supporting English Language Arts, assessments, technology, and cross-curricular teaching. Their work is influential during teacher institute days and professional learning days by creating supports for teachers that are aligned to state, district, and school goals. In order to enhance school wide feedback, the coaches create surveys and staff feedback tools to tailor professional development for the school. When outside consultants are utilized, the coaches have planning meetings before the consultants work with staff. This practice allows staff to maximize their learning with the consultants and the consultant can provide supports that personalizes learning at every grade level. The school also hosts open meetings that support designated topics. These meetings are optional, but they allow staff to share input in an informal setting. The meetings serve as brainstorming sessions to gather solutions that can be used to tailor current topics that need to be addressed.

4. School Leadership:

The building principal creates an environment that focuses on all teams working together to support the school's goals. The principal and assistant principal work to create a culture that focuses on trust, collaboration, and support. They identify goals that need to be accomplished and create pathways for staff to be included. There are multiple strategies used for communicating with the principals. The sharing of communication is ongoing so staff can participate accordingly. The staff collaborate weekly with multiple team members. Their collaborative sessions focus on academic standards, learning outcomes, assessments, instruction, and students' needs. Every presentation that represents the school highlights collaboration, passion, and talent. All faculty members share in collaborative roles, allowing them to showcase their expertise with their peers and community members. Student achievement is addressed at all meetings with staff, parents, and the community throughout the year. Student data are shared at community meetings, in addition to how the school is working to attain goals. Some of the presentation topics include differentiated instruction, analysis of student data, and professional development for staff. In addition to academics, the school implements a whole child approach by using a heart healthy platform and partnering with the American Heart Association. Specific topics address nutrition, movement, stress management, and sleep. The principal and assistant principal collaborate with the Parent Teacher Organization weekly to provide engaging activities to students, staff, and the community. The projects are aligned to school goals and also support the traditions from events the Parent Teacher Organization continues to implement. The principal also hosts coffee with the principal meetings every trimester, which is a meeting created to receive input from parents on topics that are aligned to goals throughout the year. The school practices a systematic approach to learning that encompasses academics, social-emotional learning, and team collaboration. Feedback from the faculty remains a top priority. Multiple forms of feedback are used so all voices can be shared. Effective leadership strategies include meetings, interactive messages, surveys, questionnaires, bulletin boards to post feedback, and planning sessions. There are instructional coaches who are also teachers at Brook Forest who specialize in data collection, instruction, technology, cross curricular learning. The coaching team works with the school's goals, collaborate to provide ongoing professional development, and work on assigned teams with teachers to implement best practices supported by research.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

The school works to support an inclusive learning environment that is appropriate for students' learning needs. In order to provide instruction for each student, the school implements instruction that supports a Universal Design for Learning framework. This framework allows teachers to understand student background knowledge, create instruction that is adaptable for all students in the class, and personalize instruction that enhances student performance over time. The school recognizes that culturally responsive teaching is constant and occurs naturally. This is accomplished through teachers working with special education teachers, teachers of English learners, specialists, and homeroom teachers. This allows for a more inclusive approach and teachers share their expertise on what works in their classroom. Teachers work to make meaningful connections between their own lives and what they learn at school. The teachers review student data, use student inventories, and work closely with the school social worker to create activities that are appropriate to students and each classroom. All teachers follow the same learning standards, however, learning is personalized after identifying students' strengths and how to adjust learning over time. Teachers have high expectations for every student, focusing on the positive, rather than on a child's perceived deficits. Teachers make sure the content being taught exposes them to characters and situations that they can recognize from their own lives, and allows them to learn about other worlds and perspectives. Teachers create activities and experiences to allow for students to feel represented, valued, and included. Teachers use a variety of dynamic and diverse teaching strategies such as whole group, paired, small group activities that allow students to share, discuss, disagree, think individually, and collectively. The community is also part of the learning process with parents, caregivers, grandparents, and community members who can and should be asked to share stories, provide history of our community, and offer a cultural bridge between school and the larger world community. Additional activities that the school and the community are participating in are the Global Read Aloud for six weeks, established dolphin partners across grade levels, embracing cross curricular connections with specialists, embedding social emotional learning practices in all we do across the school, inviting the community to share in our 50th Anniversary.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one strategy that has been the most beneficial to supporting academics, social emotional learning, and assessment is the heart healthy platform. The school collaborated with the American Heart Association to support a year round initiative addressing stress management, teamwork, fitness, goal setting, nutrition, sleep, and kindness. With the support of faculty, students, and parents, activities and lessons were implemented across grade levels. One strategy that the school uses consistently is hosting a comfort dog to support stress management. The comfort dog will listen to students read, visit before testing days, and visit groups of students as determined by the faculty. For teamwork, the school adopted Noelani and Tapeko, dolphins from the local zoo. The faculty were assigned to Team Noelani and Team Tapeko, which consisted of pairing various grade levels with each other. These teams were assigned specific activities, which also addressed cross curricular learning. One activity students had to complete was selecting an animal from the zoo to adopt from the share the care program. The principal adopted the animals that were voted on by students, in addition to animals that were shared by organizations within the community. The school had attended the zoo in Fall 2021 to celebrate teamwork, kindness, and stress management. Due to the positive feedback from students, parents, and the community, the school visited the zoo in Spring 2022 to celebrate the adopting of several animals. This trip to the zoo was to support teamwork stemming from the research and activities that were shared by everyone in the school. Also, students were able to put their learning into action by completing activities at the zoo with their adopted animals, highlighting how to make connections during real world experiences. Another component to this yearly project was inviting the community to share their ideas in order to enhance learning. The Oak Brook Police Department attended the dolphin show and they also adopted an animal to represent team building between the school, local zoo, and the community. The Oak Brook Library shared research tools for students to use as they were learning about the different animals adopted at the zoo. The heart healthy platform has allowed the school to implement engaging activities while placing academics as a top priority. The platform is a comprehensive model that will be implemented the following school year with additional strategies supporting all learners.